

INTRODUCTION TO TRANS AUSTRALIA AIRLINES CRM TRAINING

Capt. Jim Davidson
Trans Australia Airlines

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. I would like to do something a little different by starting to talk to you about vitamins. Vitamins are normally taken by people who are not sick, in the fond hope they won't get sick--that they will preserve their good health. Lots of people will say that they are rather useless and that a normal diet will render any vitamin supplement unnecessary, and that may be right.

The other thing about vitamin pills is that probably you will never know if you don't get sick whether it was the vitamin pills that are responsible for your continuing good health.

All that leads me to the discussion of Cockpit Resource Management and certain similarities. Most airlines that are considering adopting a form of training along these lines are not, in those terms, sick. Perhaps, some of them have had an accident rate which is concerning them, but generally they're looking at it as a preventive rather than as a curative force. There are many people that will tell you that it is unnecessary.

When we put the proposition to our own flightcrew members at Trans Australia, many of them said, "we don't need this type of training", and suggested that the management who even contemplated it needed to take the training.

Finally, as we will be talking about it in working groups, the question of evaluation as to whether this type of training is ever going to prevent an accident will be of some interest to us. It could well be that the accident that you never have you might attribute to the resource management program, but you may never prove it. So I have my analogy close to the program.

We at Trans Australia are fortunate that we are healthy in those terms. We have an excellent safety record. We have not had a loss to even begin statistical measurements, since we are not running a great number of aircraft and have had only a few, very minor, propeller-aircraft accidents.

We believe that our accident-rate record is due to a number of factors. We have a good group of standard operating procedures, and our crews are pretty well self-disciplined and adhere to those procedures. But the other thing that we, perhaps with all good modesty as one of the other experts said, believe is a factor in our safety record is that perhaps it is also due to our preparedness to be innovative, to keep up with what is going on in the rest of the world and, if it looks to have value, then to be amongst the first to try it out.

You have heard all about LOFT today. We were very early users of simulators, beginning in the 1960's. In those days, a LOFT was a small thing on the top of a house.

We commenced a program similar to LOFT fairly early in 1979--that being our first windshear program--so that leads me to why we are doing a course of resource management training, which we have chosen to call "Aircrew Team Management" (ATM).

The previous speakers have very adequately dealt with the reasons for these programs. We attended most of the seminars and workshops that have been referred to, and we are well aware of what other airlines have been doing. We have attended a number of other courses, and we are aware of such work as the "Q" effect, CRM, and others either through direct attendance or by acquainting ourselves with written or other material.

Captain Yamamori referred to a cultural difference between the United States and Japan. You may find it difficult to believe, but there is also a cultural gap that has crossed the Pacific to the southwest.

So the outcome was that we decided, since we couldn't buy an off-the-shelf type program that would suit our needs, that we would take some remarks made at the Montreal IATA training programs a year ago seriously. They were essentially, "we don't ask you to go to our program, but please do something."

I took the United course about three years ago--the Godfather CRM, if you will permit me that description. And rather than going the way of "make me an offer I can't refuse," we decided that we would take the advice we got at Montreal and would do something, and would produce a course which was tailored to our own needs.

We were fortunate at this point in that, fairly coincidentally we came in contact with the Queensland University School of Management, who were then conducting senior management planning for our administrative management. My boss, the training flight manager, got together with Professor Charles Margerison, who was teaching one of these courses, and their discussion led to a whole program that suggested that the type of training in which they specialized could be adapted to the cockpit environment, and that between us we might be able to work out a course that exactly met our needs.

So I would like to now turn our presentation over to Charles who will give you the background of our program. Charles is the Director of the design team that we worked with in producing our ATM course. The other members of the team were Dick McCann, who is also with us today, and Rod Davies.

Charles is in professional management at Queensland University, which is a major university in one of our large capital cities. He has a doctorate in educational psychology, and he also has a practical background in designing management improvement programs, with such organizations as Mobil, Kodak, Shell, and Citibank. It was that wealth of experience that we valued and used in asking Charles to assist us in establishing an innovative, and peculiarly Australian, ATM program.